

Crook County Resource Advisory Committee
October 18, 2004

Members present: Wade Pearson, Nels Smith, Larry Ellsbury, Ernest Reinhold, Dave Hurd, Joe Julian, John Shoffstall, Marlene Simons, Deb Hougham, Gilbert (Gib) Wilson, Steve Stahla, and Merle Clark.

Forest Service members present: Steve Kozel, Julie Wheeler, Carol Agard, Dave McKee, and Joyce Speidel.

Others present: Amanda Speidel from Crook County Road and Bridge, Dick Sackett from Crook County Weed and Pest, Lance Hofland and Bob Gates from Sundance High School, Jan Truchot, Karen Disney, and Beth Kreuter from Sundance Elementary School.

- 1) Meeting called to order 6:30. Quorum met in all categories.
- 2) **Minutes**
 - a) February minutes: Marlene/ Dave accept Feb minutes. Motion carried.
 - b) September minutes: Gib/ Deb accept Sept. minutes. Motion carried.
- 3) **Previously funded projects:**
 - a) **Cement Ridge-** Toilet in, working on lookout.
 - b) **Williams Spring-** Dave will speak later, as he reviews the FY04 project and goes over the FY05 project proposal.
 - c) **Warren Peak Re-striping-** Crack sealing completed, re-striping will be done this spring.
 - d) **Youth Conservation Corp-** update given at last meeting
 - e) **Upper Redwater-** Magwater application to be done next spring, road construction has been completed and has been characterized as 'successful'.
 - f) **Manly Spring-** completed, a site visit is scheduled soon.
 - g) **Cook Lake Trails-** project to start soon. The campground will be closed until project is complete.
 - h) **Bearlodge Campground-** the toilet is in, the rest of the work to be started soon.
 - i) **Crook County Rural Addressing-** equipment has been purchased, the receipts are in, the check will be cut to Crook County this week.
- 4) **Balance** from last year- Our expectation is to have some money left over from some of the funded projects. Should have actual balance at next meeting.
- 5) **Questions:** Nels asked for further information about Cement Ridge, he wondered if the cab and catwalk were complete. They are not complete. Cement Ridge was vandalized over the summer, nothing irreparable.
- 6) **New Project proposals**
 - a) **Williams Spring Project** – Dave McKee gave an update on the previously funded project and a Power Point of that project.
 - i) Questions? Nels-This is an active spring in a grazing allotment, has the water been displaced? Has grazing been interrupted? Is there water available? No, grazing has not been interrupted. Yes, there is water available for cattle and wildlife. The fencing was paid by heritage- not the permittee. The water tank is outside the enclosure.

- ii) Deb -Why are you planning for just 10 days? Dave- We want to be able to complete the project and yet leave the site as intact as possible. Deb also asked about the Cody complex and its importance. Dave told us that the finding of the Cody complex artifacts was exciting because it is very early stuff and is pretty rare. He would like to investigate this as closely as possible. Dave told us that folks from the Bearlodge fire shop filled in the pit and did a very good job.
 - iii) Steve Kozel- Your request is \$14000. Is this the bare bones estimate? Dave- Bare bones for the analysis and the excavation. You could choose either the analysis or the excavation, if you would want to go with a lesser amount. Dave's inclination would be to do more excavation, although he hates to have a backlog of artifacts. Excavation \$8000. Analysis \$6000.
 - iv) Any other questions? Nels- How far back is the heaviest concentration? Early archaic. 6000 years old, kind of conjecture at this time. Paleo-Indian right below.
 - v) Where are we in the significance of this site? Dave - Very significant for the Black Hills. There are so many activities represented here. This site is very unusual.
 - vi) Is there any relationship with this site and the Buffalo Jump? Dave- Not sure? Maybe. Would like to look at a transect of the entire Hills.
 - vii) Dave will come anywhere to do a program to any civic group that might be interested. Representatives from the library and the elementary school expressed interest to discuss the possibility of presentations at their respective places.
- b) Crook County Library**
- i) Recently doing an analysis of nonfiction materials. Found that there were several holes in their resource library. This proposal would provide resources that would help to fill these holes.
 - ii) Questions? What would be the benefit to the National Forest? All of the resources listed on the "wish list" are tied directly to natural resource awareness and/or management. Through the inter-library loan program, this information would be available for use throughout the state. The Crook County commissioners have been supportive of the local library system, recently book budget has been stable, but has not increased. Budgeted money has been spent more on computer and technology in the recent past. This project would help to fill in the gaps in the available resource materials at the County library level.
- c) Water Quality Survey and Testing**
- i) Lance Hofland and Scott Tangenberg- This project would have the kids at the high school do some water quality testing and reporting. The school is excited about this type of project, because it would allow students to practice life skills outside of the classroom. The Forest Service is excited about this project because some needed water quality testing would be done.
 - ii) Questions? Ernie- Which SHS teachers would be involved in this project? Julie Cross, Lance Hofland, Ken Crowson. Data would be made useful to many agencies, the county, the city, forest service. Public would own data.

The Site license is a one time fee, and because it is for an educational facility, is far less expensive than a site license for a professional site. If we wanted to apply the license to other schools in the district in addition to Sundance High School the fee would be \$250 per school.

d) Sundance 5th and 6th grade- Ranch A Environmental Education Experience

- i) This project would bring the 5th and 6th graders to Ranch A for a two day resource camp. The 6th graders would spend one night at Ranch A. This project would involve USFS Resource specialists, teachers, parents, Ranch A Foundation, the Crook County Weed and Pest and the Crook County Cattlewomen. Other specialists have been discussed, but we don't have confirmation from other agencies.
 - ii) Questions? Comments? Ernie- You have requested enough money to rent Ranch A, would a limitation of the funding kill the project? Not necessarily. Less funding than what is requested would limit what we could accomplish.
 - iii) Why did you choose these particular GPS units and compasses? Jan- These units are the simplest we could get to do what we'd like to teach the kids to do. Deb emphasized that we are a technological world; it is good to give the kids technology now.
 - iv) Jan - Along with the compasses we would be purchasing TOPO which is more limited software than Arch view, but compatible with what Lance is planning to do at the HS level.
- 7) Five minute break at 8:50.
- 8) Back in session 8:00.

9) New Project Proposals continued

a) Matt Stefanich- Wildlife Projects

- i) **Bat Habitat-** This project would remove a closure placed over a cave opening several years ago, and replace the closure with a gate that would allow bat access, but not allow human access. Matt is still gathering cost estimates for this project, and hopes to have the final numbers before the next RAC meeting.
 - ii) **Wetlands improvements** projects are also being discussed. There are currently two projects on the Bearlodge portion of the Forest that Matt is considering for partnership projects. Matt plans to be here next month to make presentations.
- b) **Youth Conservation Corp-** Same project as last year, with one child less. Same program that has been funded the last few years. At one time there was funding from the Forest. Steve wondered about the increase of cost over last year. Steve will ask Jeanette about the cost increase. Good program. Provides a work environment for kids in the area.
- c) **Weed and Pest/ USFS project-** Dick Sackett here to make presentation. The project plans for treatment of county roads that are Forest Service access. The estimated cost of chemical is considered as if you had to treat everything. We probably won't have to spray everything. The chemical that would tentatively be used is Sabre Tordon 24D. This product costs a little more than the standard 24D. The goal of this project would be to prevent weed seeds from being transported into the Forest and vice versa. How much will the chemical cost? \$1100. About

\$50 per mile. \$600 for applicator. 16 foot on each side of the road. Have you considered coordination of the project so that the entire road is covered, not just that portion leading into the Forest? Is there an agreement in place between the county and the Forest Service for weed control? Yes. The contractor can continue down the same road. Dick mentioned that there is legislation pending in Congress that will make more money available for weed control. First year \$15 million nationally. Even if that money is not available now, Steve thought that there should be money available to continue throughout the forest. Merle mentioned that he thought that the person or company that constructed the road is responsible for weed control for five years after the completion of a road project. Is Crook County Road and Bridge going to help pay for the weed control? Merle will check into what the laws are concerning the weed control on newly constructed roads.

d) Julie Wheeler - Range

- i) Currently looking at presenting a project that would include weed education awareness posters/ signs in local campgrounds. These would include, but not necessarily be limited to Cook Lake, Bearlodge, Sundance, Reuter, Keyhole and the Dugout Botanical Area. Potentially this would be a joint project with Crook County Weed and Pest. Poster and sign cost would be minimal. The posters would include phone numbers for the Bearlodge Ranger District and the Crook County Weed and Pest for more information.
- ii) An additional interpretive sign is being considered for the Dugout Botanical Area. This sign is intended to educate the public about the diversity and unique plant life in the area, and to warn of the dangers of invasive and noxious weeds.
- iii) Range has also talked tentatively with Kenneth Crowson at Sundance High School about the possibility of partnering with the Sundance FFA and the Crook County Weed and Pest to do weed inventory on and near the forest boundary. Julie hopes to have figures and a workable plan ready to present to the RAC in November.
- iv) Questions/ Comments Nels- based on what he has seen before, he asked that these project proposals would take care to focus on weeds across the spectrum, not just introduced or imported varieties. Native weed species should also be included. He urged us to keep that in mind as the message is shaped.

10) Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

11) Next scheduled meeting November 15, 2004. 6:30 PM. Bearlodge Ranger District Office, 121 South 21st Street, Sundance.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce E. Speidel